TRANSIT INSIDER MCTS NEWS FOR STAKEHOLDERS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS



QTR 3, 2021



THE ROAD AHEAD DAN BOEHM, MCTS MANAGING DIRECTOR

As we edge closer to Autumn, we know that 2021 has already been another year marked by COVID-19. In some ways, we are starting to get used to the ups and downs, but when will it end?

So far this year, we are achieving significant milestones as a transit system and as a community. We broke ground on the construction of the first Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line in the State. We rolled out a momentous redesign of the transit network to provide more frequent and faster service for a larger portion of our community through the MCTS NEXT plan. We also cheered side-by-side, loud and wide across Wisconsin as the Milwaukee Bucks won a long-pursued NBA Championship.

While we experienced these many high points, we also know that there is much work to be done. Our current low count of Bus Operators is challenging our ability to reliably meet passenger schedules. Workforce shortages also caused us to pull out of State Fair and Summerfest. Not providing seasonal special event services this year is particularly hard to accept because so many Bus Operators have been working their tails off – taking on extra shifts and working on their days off – to keep us moving forward. HR staff have been aggressively working to hire more employees, and Trainers, alongside Platform Instructors, have been doubling down on preparing our newest hires for a career in transit.

To help boost applications, MCTS recently launched "What Drives Me?," a new advertising campaign to encourage people to consider a rewarding and family-sustaining career as a bus driver. The recruitment campaign – which features advertisements on buses, bus shelters, billboards, radio, TV, and social media – kicked off in August and runs through mid-September. This unique campaign features photos of MCTS Bus Drivers, Instructors and two Route Supervisors.

While challenges remain on the road ahead, our mission is clear: we connect our community to jobs, education and life with essential transit services every day. Along the way there will be many more high points to celebrate, because MCTS will come back from the pandemic stronger and help our community to build back better.



GOVERNOR EVERS PARTIALLY RESTORES FUNDING GAP FOR TRANSIT IN MILWAUKEE COUNTY

Governor Tony Evers recently announced a \$19.7 million investment in transit services for Milwaukee County, restoring some of the funds that were cut by the Legislature's Joint Committee on Finance during the state budget process earlier this year.

This investment – which was supported by the state's American Rescue Plan Act dollars – will help fill a gap in funding created when Republican legislators voted to cut \$32.7 million from public transit funding in Milwaukee County over the biennium.

The resources provided will help Milwaukee County support transit services so that Wisconsinites can get to work, school and job training, medical appointments, and other activities, especially low-to-middle-income Wisconsinites, individuals with disabilities, and communities of color who disproportionately depend on public transit.

"I often talk about connecting the dots, and that is exactly what our vital transit systems do across our state, helping workers, families, and students get from point A to point B safely," said Gov. Evers. "For our most urban centers to be targeted by Republican cuts during the last budget was a slap in the face to the disproportionate number of Wisconsinites in those communities who depend on public transit to get to school, work, doctor's appointments — you name it. I am glad to be putting our ARPA funds to good use in these communities to help ensure our families, workers and businesses, and our economic drivers for the state continue to bounce back from the pandemic and see long-term economic recovery."



TRANSIT ADVOCACY

INVESTING IN MILWAUKEE COUNTY By Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley



DAVID CROWLEY

Milwaukee County Executive

- By 2027, Milwaukee County will have no local dollars for services such as transit, parks, public safety and more.
- Having the tools to invest in transit is key to Milwaukee County continuing being an asset for the state.
- Some of the most successful businesses are choosing to invest in regions with neighborhoods connected by strong public transit.

It is no secret that Milwaukee County is changing and this summer the entire world caught a glimpse of the potential our region has when more than 65,000 people gathered to watch and celebrate their Milwaukee Bucks clinch an NBA Championship.

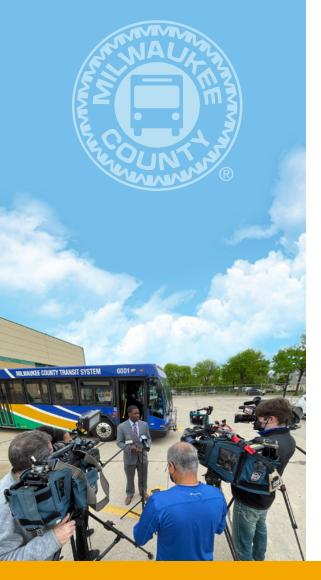
Our good fortune is proof that Milwaukee County is transforming into a major draw for national attention. Fiserv Forum is quickly becoming an iconic venue and this summer Deer District became a household name. None of this is possible without the important investments made in Milwaukee County and the people who live here.

Years ago, we worked to develop the sports entertainment district we have today and it paid off this summer in a big way with thousands of visitors and residents spending their dollars at local restaurants, bars, and stores during the playoffs, generating millions each night the Bucks played a home game. The success was a product of a bi-partisan partnership between local and state leaders, supported by our business community, to invest in

Milwaukee with the expectation it would pay dividends to the entire state.

The success we saw over this summer is only the start. Fiserv provided the blueprint to success, and by pursuing a similar model, we can work toward a common goal, that brings benefits to Milwaukee, the region, and the state.

If Milwaukee is provided the ability to leverage our economic growth, we can put those dollars to work, investing in regional assets and county services to improve the quality of life that attracts energized talent, new businesses, and capital investment. This is a pivotal point in time, with the national spotlight on Milwaukee, we can take advantage of the historic tourism spending, visitor spending from Summerfest and our festivals, Brewers games, and of course, future Bucks playoff games. That's why I'm continuing to advocate for a local option sales tax. It is an opportunity to provide Milwaukee the ability to continue as a globally competitive metro region and the state's economic engine.



Over the past decade, Milwaukee has closed a cumulative budget gap of \$320 million. We closed an average budget gap of \$30 million every year by taking unprecedented actions to make government leaner, implement efficiencies, and streamline services. Even with these actions, the continued growth of our structural deficit places us in an untenable position; by 2027, Milwaukee County will have no local dollars for local services such as transit, parks, public safety and more. While the cost of state-mandated services rise with inflation, state aides remain flat, including a \$32 million cut in the most recent state budget to Milwaukee County Transit System over the next two years. Thankfully, Governor Evers is stepping up to help by investing \$19.7 million to partially fill that gap.

Continuing our economic growth requires us to be globally competitive with other metro regions to attract capital investment

and human capital to our region. Some of the most successful businesses are choosing to invest in regions with neighborhoods connected by strong public transit systems.. With the right tools, Milwaukee can make investments in our transit system that leverage existing data to understand and improve service to make sure individuals and communities are connected. Whether its exploring routes, service, or on-demand transit options, having the tools to invest in transit is key to Milwaukee County continuing being an asset for the state by attracting investment and employees, while generating higher economic output. Let's learn from the successful lessons of the past and doubledown on investing in Milwaukee County. The time is now for our local leaders, in partnership with our leaders at the State Capitol, to put Milwaukee County in a position to do more for its residents, and the entire state, by giving us the tools to take advantage of new, additional revenue.

CLICK HERE FOR ADDITIONAL READING ON SALES TAX SUPPORT FROM THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY SUBMITTED BY: JULIA TAYLOR, PRESIDENT, GREATER MILWAUKEE COMMITTEE; GREG MARCUS, PRESIDENT AND CEO, THE MARCUS CORP. DAVID LUBAR, PRESIDENT AND CEO, LUBAR & CO.; DR. EVE HALL, PRESIDENT AND CEO, MILWAUKEE URBAN LEAGUE; GREG NICKERSON, CHAIRMAN, BADER RUTTER; ELLEN GILLIGAN, PRESIDENT AND CEO, GREATER MILWAUKEE FOUNDATION.

WHO'S DRIVING OUR SUCCESS HUMAN RESOURCES

Each issue will spotlight an MCTS employee or department delivering on our mission.

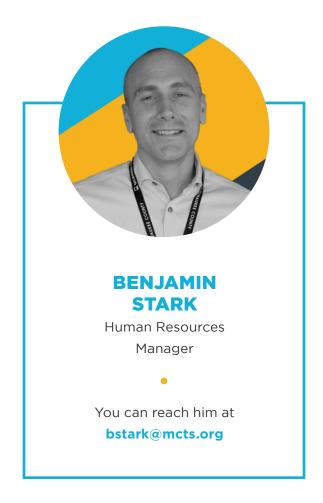
Describe your position at MCTS. As the Human Resources Manager, I provide support and direction to the following areas: Talent Acquisition, HRIS (Ceridian), Performance Management, Training and Compensation.

How long have you worked here? I have worked at MCTS for more than five years, and during that time I've encountered many reasons why people choose a particular career path. Our main focus now is hiring bus operators. The best candidates are those who want a job that supports the community and helps others. I believe that Operators stay with MCTS because it is a very stable job that someone can retire from with a great pension. It also has respectable wages, one of the best benefit packages in the area and it supports the community.

Anything else you'd like to share - a little known fact either about yourself, hobby, or job? Outside of work, people may not know that I have been painting murals in my spare time for over 15 years. In 2009, I founded Painting It Forward. The mission is to use proceeds from commissioned work in the U.S. to paint for different schools and communities around the world. Since 2009, we have painted over 50 murals within 30+

schools around the world. We have completed multiple projects in each of the following countries: Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, Colombia, Thailand and Cambodia. You can check out our website here: Painting It Forward | Mural Paintings

What surprises new hires about working at MCTS? New Operators say they are surprised by how they have been immediately accepted by veteran Operators, and how they feel like part of the family and team right away.





TIFFANY MOORE

Human Resources Employment Supervisor

"Becoming a part of

MCTS is more than just a

job— it's like a family."

You can reach her at tmoore@mcts.org

WHO'S DRIVING OUR SUCCESS HUMAN RESOURCES

Describe your position at MCTS. As Employment Supervisor, I am responsible for overseeing and facilitating the talent acquisition process for all represented and non-represented positions. I also provide direct supervision, guidance and support for the HR Employment Team.

How long have you worked here? In November 2021, I'll have worked at MCTS for six years.

Recruitment is currently a challenge in industries all around the world. There are a lot of jobs available right now. What would you say to an applicant about why they should choose MCTS? MCTS is a great place to work! It's a family-sustaining, well-recognized organization that offers great benefits, job stability and a rewarding career that positively impacts our community. Also, MCTS employees are amazing! Becoming a part of MCTS is more than just a job— it's like a family. Our employees are personable, compassionate and genuinely care about helping others. MCTS truly invests in their employees as well (i.e., Tuition Reimbursement, Referral Bonus, Sign on Bonus, healthcare, pension, etc.)! Who wouldn't want to be a part of this Company?

Anything else you'd like to share - a little known fact either about yourself, hobby, or job? I'm a huge animal lover! I'd definitely be a proponent of 'Take Your Dog to Work Day' if the opportunity ever presents itself in the future!



DENNIS R. MCBRIDE

Mayor, City of Wauwatosa



WHO'S RIDING? RIDER PROFILES

How long have you been riding the bus? Since I was a teenager. I'm almost 68 years old now. I love all forms of mass transit— subways, commuter trains, and buses. In the different cities in which I've lived, I've ridden all kinds.

What is your primary reason for riding? Convenience, affordability, and a desire to protect the environment.

Do you use the bus for other reasons? Yes. I enjoy people-watching. It's never a dull day on the bus. Also, I'm glad to let our good MCTS drivers do the driving for me, especially in bad weather.

Do you have a regular bus driver? Any thoughts on them, or general service you receive? Over the years, I've had several regular drivers. Almost all have been friendly and helpful. With some who became good friends, their smiles and kind words always took the edge off a long day.

How did COVID-19 affect your bus travel? I don't ride the bus as often now, because I no longer work downtown.

When I do ride, as I did when I attended Bucks playoff games, I wore a mask -- no big deal.

What's something interesting about riding the bus people might not know or think about? Some of the bus routes follow the old streetcar routes, as the old No. 10 down Wells Street and Wisconsin Avenue once did.

If you could encourage someone to try riding the bus, what would you say? Enjoy the ride. Interact with people. Make new friends. Save Mother Earth. Let our good MCTS drivers do the driving for us, especially in bad weather.

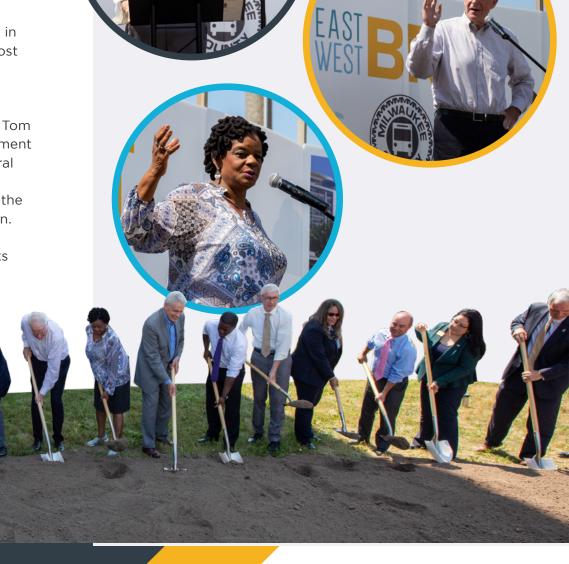
Any other fun fact about your personal experience riding the bus? When I attended UWM, I used to ride the UBUS. It allowed me to get back and forth faster, sort of like a Freeway Flyer, and helped me to afford my college education.

TRANSIT SPOTLIGHT EAST-WEST BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT) BREAKS GROUND!

Local, State, and Federal officials gathered in Milwaukee on June 10, 2021 for a groundbreaking ceremony to kick off construction on the Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS)'s East-West Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project, a first-of-its-kind undertaking in Wisconsin that will provide improved access to the region's most vital, most traveled, and most congested corridor.

Governor Tony Evers, U.S. Congresswoman Gwen Moore, Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley, Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett, Wauwatosa Mayor Dennis McBride, Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) Secretary Craig Thompson, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Regional Administrator Kelley Brookins, and Milwaukee Alderman Bob Bauman were among the guests who spoke about the importance of transit in our region.

Click **here** to watch a livestream of the event, including remarks from all of the speakers.



TRANSIT SPOTLIGHT EAST-WEST BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT) BREAKS GROUND!

The nine-mile BRT route will allow MCTS to better connect major employment, education and recreation destinations through downtown Milwaukee, Marquette University, Milwaukee's Near West Side, Wauwatosa, and the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center (MRMC).

The BRT route will operate primarily along Wisconsin Avenue, Bluemound Road, and a portion of 92nd Street. Ultra-modern battery-electric buses will serve 33 individual, state-of-the-art stations located between Milwaukee's lakefront and the Watertown Plank Road Park & Ride lot.

BRT passengers will enjoy more efficient, higher frequency service thanks to the utilization of all-electric buses, dedicated bus lanes, traffic signal priority, off-board fare collection, optimized station locations, raised platforms that allow for easy boarding, and other exciting amenities.

Nova Bus, a leading North American transportation manufacturer that's part of the Volvo Group, will produce 11 LFSe+ battery-electric buses that will run exclusively on the BRT route. Learn more about the vehicles here.

BRT construction is already underway. Revenue service is expected to start in Fall 2022.

Click **here** to watch a montage showing select TV news coverage about the groundbreaking ceremony.



NEWS ON THE STREETBRT CONSTRUCTION



Construction is now underway! The photos above show some of the work that is currently being done at the site of future BRT stations!

Click here to visit the BRT's new construction website for more information about the project, including a routing map that shows where buses will stop to pick up and drop off passengers.

MCTS NEXT PHASE 3 MARKS MILESTONE ACHIEVEMENT

The third – and final – phase of our MCTS NEXT system redesign took effect August 29, 2021 with improvements and adjustments to **Routes 22, 28, 54, 55, 56, 60, 76,** and **BlueLine**. Additionally, there are three new routes – **Routes 18, 66,** and **92**. **Routes 64** and **67** are retired.

The completion of MCTS NEXT is a milestone achievement for transit in our community, adding faster service into new corridors, expanding access to unserved and underserved job areas,

creating better connections to shopping destinations, and making routes

easier to understand.

The MCTS system now features 60% high-frequency service (compared to 40% prior to the redesign). There are 17% more trips across the board on weekdays, meaning buses arrive more often. When buses come more often, passengers enjoy an increase in reliability and can more easily transfer to other routes.





"MCTS NEXT HAS BEEN AN
EXCITING EFFORT - YEARS IN
THE MAKING - TO UPDATE THE
ROUTE NETWORK, IMPROVE
THE RIDER EXPERIENCE,
AND MEET MILWAUKEE
COUNTY'S MODERN NEEDS,"
SAID MILWAUKEE COUNTY
EXECUTIVE DAVID CROWLEY.

"THIS IMPORTANT PROJECT
EXPANDS ACCESS TO PARTS
OF OUR COMMUNITY THAT
HAVE GONE UNDERSERVED,
OR UNSERVED, FOR FAR
TOO LONG. MCTS NEXT
HELPS FACILITATE A MORE
CONNECTED MILWAUKEE
COUNTY AND GIVES RESIDENTS
THE OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT
DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES,
WORK OPPORTUNITIES, AND
SHOPPING DESTINATIONS
WITH EASE."

As part of MCTS NEXT's phased implementation in 2021, MCTS conducted a comprehensive communications effort. In addition to making information available online and via phone 24 hours a day, MCTS launched an English and Spanish-language advertising campaign on buses, bus shelters, billboards, radio, TV, newspapers, news websites, and social media. There are also audio announcements playing on board buses, informative bus stop signage, special passenger newsletters, virtual meetings, neighborhood outreach, and more.

PASSENGERS INTERESTED IN LEARNING ABOUT THE NEW AND IMPROVED SYSTEM CAN VISIT **RIDEMCTS.COM/NEXT** OR CALL **414-344-6711** FOR MORE INFORMATION.



FREEWAY FLYERS RETURN

All Freeway Flyer routes (**Routes 40, 43, 44, 46, 48, 49, 79, & 143**) resumed service, with schedule adjustments, on August 30, 2021.

Freeway Flyers, which are buses that operate primarily between Park & Ride lots and downtown Milwaukee on weekday mornings and afternoons, were suspended in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic when many downtown businesses shut down in-person activity and transitioned to remote work — reducing the demand for commuter buses.

Now that businesses are starting to reopen physical offices in the downtown area, and with even more openings planned in the coming months, MCTS is resuming its Freeway Flyers to help employees get to and from work.

However, because demand is not yet expected to be at pre-pandemic levels, Freeway Flyers will make fewer trips than they used to.

PASSENGERS ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO VIEW UPDATED SCHEDULES ON RIDEMCTS.COM BEFORE PLANNING THEIR NEXT TRIP.

Route 40

(College Avenue Flyer)

Route 43

(Hales Corners Flyer)

Route 44

(State Fair Park Flyer)

Route 46

(Loomis-Holt Flyer)

Route 48

(South Shore Flyer)

Route 49

(Brown Deer-Bayshore Flyer)

Route 79

(Menomonee Falls Flyer) This service, operated by MCTS, is funded by Waukesha County.

Route 143

(Ozaukee County Express) This service, operated by MCTS, is funded by Ozaukee County.



MCTS IN THE COMMUNITY

For the first time in more than a year, MCTS's community outreach efforts extended outdoors as part of highly visible events across Milwaukee County.

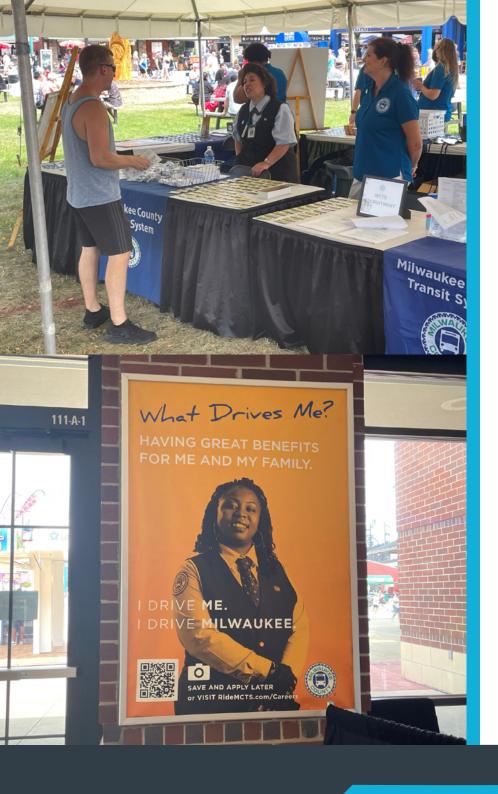
50th Anniversary of Milwaukee's Juneteenth Day

MCTS took part in the 50th Annual Juneteenth Day Parade and Festival held on Saturday, June 19. Like many major events in 2020, the Juneteenth Day Parade and Festival were cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic. This year, it came back bigger and brighter than before and on live television thanks to TMJ4! Several MCTS employees, representing a cross-section of the company, marched with the bus in the parade. MCTS also had a presence at the street festival as staff members recruited potential bus operators and mechanics.

Night Out Summer Events in the Parks

National Night Out is a community-police awareness-raising event in the United States, held the first Tuesday of August. Locally in Milwaukee County, various local elected officials and neighborhood groups host similar events to connect residents to various resources and activities for all ages. On June 8, MCTS took part in the McGovern Park Night Out, hosted by Milwaukee County Supervisor Sequanna Taylor. MCTS also provided informational materials and giveaway items for the Wedgewood Park Night Out on July 30 hosted by Milwaukee County Supervisor Joseph Czarnezki.





MCTS IN THE COMMUNITY

Recruitment Day at State Fair

The 'MCTS Bus Driver Recruitment' Day at the Wisconsin State Fair on Friday, August 6 was a success! Team members from our HR, Marketing, Customer Service, and Planning Departments -- as well as KK bus driver Karen Martinez-Casper -- all helped staff the tent. This effort resulted in thousands of impressions as fairgoers walked by our high-traffic location in 'Central Park,' outside the Cream Puff Pavilion, seeing our informational banners and signage. Dozens of people stopped by for some MCTS freebies and to talk about topics like recruitment, MCTS NEXT, CVP, bus routes, etc.

In addition to the physical 'recruitment tent', we also had an ongoing recruitment advertising campaign on display at the fairgrounds. Visitors saw our static advertisements inside the Expo Center as well as rotating digital messages on TVs inside the building. An MCTS ad is also in rotation on the large billboard screen alongside I-94 in front of State Fair Park. All of this resulted in tens of thousands of impressions during this year's State Fair.

ADVANCING RACIAL EQUITY DIVERSITY TRAINING

Describe the training you facilitated

The "Understanding the Impact of Unconscious Bias" training series came to be as part of MCTS's efforts to further build a more equitable and inclusive workplace. The objective was to help us better understand that having a diverse organization can have a remarkably positive impact on employee engagement, performance, and overall productivity. However, unconscious bias can get in the way of true diversity and inclusivity, as it leads to an unfair and potentially toxic work environment. By proactively understanding, identifying, and addressing our biases we can create a workplace with a culture rooted in empathy and kindness.

Who did you train? How many sessions, length, etc.

"Understanding the Impact of Unconscious Bias" was a twopart series. Each session was 3 hours which provided a total of 6 hours of training. I trained nearly 100 people including Executive Leadership, Directors, Managers, and Supervisors.

Important learnings

The training helped to provide foundational understanding of the negative impact of bias in the workplace and provided leaders with the necessary tools to help build more diverse, high-performing teams.

Next steps

Achieving diversity and inclusion is a continuous journey. It's a place that takes all our best efforts to arrive at! The next phase in our journey is a Racial Equity training series that I will be facilitating beginning in October. In order to effectively move toward Racial Equity, an organization's culture must prioritize humanity and provide their team members with the ability to work with the dignity of having their life experiences acknowledged. By doing so we can maximize our efforts to recruit and retain a thriving, diverse workforce. I am incredibly excited to be a part of MCTS's initiatives to tackle these challenging issues and provide a space of deeper understanding and growth for our team members. I am proud to be with an organization that truly values equity, diversity, and inclusion.



HR Training Partner, Milwaukee County Transit System

ON BOARD

MCTS CELEBRATES 31ST ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

This summer marked the 31st anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which works to ensure all people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else.

MCTS takes pride in being accessible to all riders. All of our buses feature equipment designed to assist passengers of all abilities, allowing them to have a positive experience throughout their trip.

Here are just some of the ways MCTS works hard to be accessible each day:

- Every MCTS bus is an accessible, low-floor vehicle. Operators can lower the front of the bus to a "kneeling" position so passengers who have difficulty stepping up can board more easily.
- All of our buses are also equipped with ramps at the front door, so that passengers with mobility devices like canes, walkers, wheelchairs or small scooters can board the bus on a gentle incline.
- Designated seating for seniors and people with disabilities is available at the front of every bus.
 The seats also flip up to allow for someone in a mobility device to be secured.
- Buses announce their route when the front door opens. While the bus is traveling, the audio system also announces bus stops, transfer

- points, and landmarks all to help persons who are blind or low vision safely and effectively navigate the community.
- · While the audio announcements are playing on board, text is also shown on the digital display board near the front of the bus to help inform anyone who is deaf or hard of hearing.
- · Personal Care Attendants (PCA)'s are allowed to ride for free to assist passengers who have been given that designation on their Transit Plus Pass.
- · Service animals accompanying persons with disabilities are permitted on the bus.
- Our Travel Training and Mobility Management Programs help seniors, people with disabilities, and anyone else who is interested... ride the bus safely and independently through free travel training, community outreach, and other useful tools.
- · MCTS is proud to offer an innovative service that supports MCTS riders who are blind or low vision. Using the Aira app, passengers can receive free, one-on-one assistance riding the bus and navigating to and from any bus stop.
- The Transit Plus Pass allows eligible Transit Plus riders, who are interested and able, to ride MCTS buses unlimited times for \$2 per day.

- The Transit Plus program contracts with First Transit and Transit Express to provide ADA accessible van service and American United to provide taxi service to eligible paratransit riders.
- Through our MCTS Excellence program, many of our bus drivers have been highlighted for their acts of kindness, compassion, and the important skills that they learned while participating in our nationally-recognized ADA Sensitivity driver training.



UPCOMING ISSUE

Watch your e-mail for our next newsletter featuring topics such as:

- WI/MN Transit Conference Duluth
- Fare Collection
- 2022 Budget
- MCTS Introduces Public Allies Interns



Federal Mask Mandate Extended to January 18, 2022

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) recently announced that it will extend its federal mask mandate for all bus, train, and airline passengers into next year, requiring face coverings until January 18, 2022.



MISSION:

MCTS connects our community to jobs, education and life with essential transit services.



VISION:

To be the preferred transportation choice through service excellence and innovation.



VALUES:

Respect, Integrity, Excellence, Equity, Collaboration, Innovation

